

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

No. 406.]

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1859.

[PRICE 1d.]



A STROLL THROUGH RUNNING WATER PLANTATION.

THE CAPTAIN'S STORY:

OR, ADVENTURES IN JAMAICA THIRTY YEARS AGO.

CHAPTER VIII.—RUNNING WATER.

He who in a far-off land, many, many thousand miles from home, has met, suddenly and unexpectedly, an old friend of his boyhood, a schoolfellow, can haply enter into my feelings as I follow Jasper and his wife into their house.

No. 406. 1859.

How cool and delightful were the highly polished waxen floors, and the broad verandahs. What a luxury it was to sit down in the shade, away from the piercing heat of the sun's rays, which had penetrated my low-crowned straw hat till my head seemed on fire.

"We are unfashionable enough to dine in the middle of the day," said Jasper, "which is a fortunate thing for you, gentlemen, as you will pro-

s s

bably get a better second-breakfast than you otherwise would."

"I wish we dined at two at mess," said Gibson, who was always hungry.

"And again at seven, Johnny, eh?" I asked.

"We might have supper then."

"I thought so—two dinners instead of one."

"Mr. Gibson is quite right," said Jasper, politely; "eat often, that's the plan out here: it is bad to go too long without food."

"It all depends upon the meaning of the phrase 'too long,'" I said; "but I think you are quite right to dine early: I wish we did too; you go out walking just as we go to mess, I daresay?"

"To be sure we do, every evening: stroll about through the sugar canes, and by the Indian-corn fields, and up into the bush sometimes, whilst you are stewing amidst hot joints and reeking soups."

Mrs. Jasper and Miss Mary now entered the room. The dishevelled hair had been, in toilet phraseology, "put up," the flushed face was calmed into sobriety, the laughing eyes were tutored into propriety, and the whole appearance of Miss Mary wore an evident effort at demureness.

Enter a tall, slight mulatto boy in a striped cotton jacket and white trowsers (Manchester goods), the said trowsers rolled up to his knees, displaying his copper-coloured legs and naked feet; he was a handsome lad, and, as a matter of course, had fine eyes and splendid teeth.

"Ah! Archy, dinner ready?" said Jasper.

"Yes, massa, ebbery ting ready, sa!"

"I am glad of it, so am I. Mr. Holt, will you take Mrs. Jasper. Mr. Gibson, will you—oh!—"

Already at the door with Miss Mary, I did not hear more.

"Did you ever taste 'pepper-pot,' Mr. Brook?" asked Mrs. Jasper, as she helped me to soup.

"No indeed, nor any other West Indian luxury; I don't know the names of half the things I see around me—what are those?" pointing to a dish of huge, long, rough-looking objects, more like roasted logs of wood with the bark on than anything I could think of.

Mrs. Jasper laughed. "You really are quite 'a fresh man' Mr. Brook, if you don't know a yam by sight, the West Indian potato."

"Are those yams?—are they not very large ones?"

"Why, yes, they—hallo! anything the matter, Mr. Gibson?" cried Jasper. For Gibson, nearly purple in the face, had jumped up from table as if he were shot, and was hurrying out of the room.

I really thought he had been stung by some venomous insect or other, and was getting up to follow him, when Jasper said, with a smile, "I think I know what is the matter; sit still;" and taking a piece of bread in his hand, he went into the verandah, from whence a violent spluttering and coughing proceeded.

"I think I know what has happened, too," said Mrs. Jasper. "Mr. Gibson has been eating one of these"—she pointed to a branch of red berries which garnished each salt-cellar.

"I had observed them before," I said, "but not

knowing whether they were for ornament or use, I had been afraid to touch them."

"Lucky for you, or you would have set your mouth on fire, as poor Mr. Gibson has; these red pods are bird's-eye peppers, from which the strongest cayenne is extracted; each little pod is full of seeds, and each seed is a little ball of fire. Oh! here comes Mr. Gibson; how stupid and rude it is to want to laugh upon these occasions," she added, biting her lips, as Gibson returned to table, his face in a flame, his mouth open, and the tears still streaming down his cheeks.

"Mr. Gibson has inadvertently eaten some of these bird's-eye peppers," said Jasper, trying not to laugh; "it was our fault: we ought to have warned him of their power."

I looked at Miss Mary out of the corner of my eye; she was struggling hard for composure.

"I thought they were barbaries," said Gibson, mournfully, and looking so hot and watery, that I, for one, could contain my mirth no longer. Harry followed suit—we might laugh, surely.

Gibson seized a decanter of water.

"Don't drink, Mr. Gibson; it will make you ten times worse; it will set your mouth in a perfect flame—eat another piece of bread, it is by far the best thing to take out the heat."

This was said in a trembling voice, for Gibson was opening and shutting his mouth, and making dreadful faces.

He immediately pounced upon a large lump of bread, and began eating away as if for a wager.

He was sitting exactly opposite Miss Mary. I felt her chair shaking, and again I squinted round. She was in fits of laughter, and bending over her plate to try and hide it.

Mrs. Jasper was nearly as bad—Jasper much worse—the mine only wanted one spark—it had lit.

"Mu—mum—mi—I feel bu—better," said Gibson, his mouth full of bread.

Away went Miss Mary out of the room, her clear ringing laugh sounding far away down the garden.

Mrs. Jasper leant back, threw her handkerchief over her face, and joined chorus with the pent-up volley which shook us all in our seats, Gibson included.

"Oh the merry days when we were young;" that laugh did the work of weeks: we were all friends, intimate friends, from that moment. "Don't apologise, please, Mrs. Jasper, please, Miss Mary," said Johnny, who was a most good-natured fellow; "who could have helped laughing? I don't mind it a bit," and he didn't either.

"Come, Mr. Gibson, have a glass of sangaree with me, in token of your forgiveness for our rudeness; it will cool your throat, now the chief of the fire is drawn out."

Archy paraded round the table with a huge demi-john made of unglazed brick-earth, and filled our tumblers with the most delicious beverage I had ever tasted.

Reader, have you ever drank "sangaree" in perfection? that is to say, when you were very hot, and the fluid very cold—in the tropics, in short;

concocted and cooled by an artist, such as Jasper proved himself to be.

Ah! it was delicious: madeira, water, spices, aromatic herbs, and thin curls of the exquisitely delicate lime peel floating on the surface.

"What do you think of sangaree, Brook?" said Jasper, as I returned my empty tumbler to the table.

"I think it is nectar, the drink of the gods, that we used to read about in former days; nectar always sounded delicious; I am glad I have tasted it: but how do you manage to ice it? have you ice in Jamaica in winter?"

"We have no ice, and no winter in Jamaica; we used to import ice from America, but the doctors said it was detrimental to health; now, we cool our drinks by evaporation—see."

He drew my attention to the verandah behind me; there, ranged in line on a board punctured with many holes, were bottles, jugs, and demi-johns cased in flannel, and soured continually with water, which water ran through the boards into the garden below.

I observed that the bottles were on the sunny side of the verandah.

"The sun has got to your ice-house, Jasper," I observed, fancying it was a mistake.

"The sun is the making of my ice-house; the hotter he burns, the quicker the evaporation, and consequently, provided always that the flannels are kept wet, the cooler the wine."

"Well, we 'live and learn,' and certainly I have a great deal to learn in Jamaica."

"Yes, it's a queer place, but not altogether a bad place either. Oh! here are Miss Mary's *granadillas*: they are the best part of the passion-flower, to my fancy."

So saying, he took a *granadilla*, which was about the size of a large orange, cut a slice off the top sufficiently large to admit a table-spoon, poured in about a half a glass of madeira, and stirred up the contents till the wine and the fruit were well mixed together. "There, gentlemen, taste that," he said, handing the prepared fruit to Harry, "and if you think 'strawberries and cream' are fit 'to hold a candle' to the Jamaica *granadilla*, I am much mistaken."

"It looks exactly like 'strawberries and cream,'" said Harry.

"Oh it is like, but so superior! Come, try it; you look as if you were half afraid of it, Mr. Holt."

"I know the taste of the *granadilla* well; this is not my first visit to Jamaica," replied Harry, "therefore I have no right to be helped first—here, Brook."

Neither of the ladies would touch it before the two new comers; so Gibson and I each devoured a *granadilla* in greedy silence; and I have no hesitation in confirming my friend Jasper's verdict as to its surpassing excellence. It is indeed, in my estimation, the most luscious, the richest, the most exquisitely flavoured of all the many rich and rare fruits of the tropics.

It would be tedious, I fear, were I to enumerate the various fruits, all new to me, which formed the dessert at Running Water that day.

Suffice it to say, there was the *custard-apple*, the *star-apple*, the *banana*, the *pine-apple* and the *neebary*, the latter fruit very much resembling our medlar, but of a richer flavour. Neither will I stay to discuss the opposing merits of *plantain*, *yam*, and *sweet-potato*, as vegetables; merely observing *en passant*, that I give the palm to the white flowery *yam*, though neither of the others are to be despised. "But you have not described 'pepper-pot,'" I think I hear an epicurean reader say. The omission shall be, to the best of my ability, rectified, though no description can do it justice. You must go to Jamaica, dear reader, if you would thoroughly understand the mysterious excellencies of that renowned *potage*.

Pepper-pot is the king of vegetable soups, as turtle is of animal soups. The vegetables which are pressed into the service for the due concoction of pepper-pot are far too numerous for me to remember, even if I ever knew; but of this I am sure, viz., that the capsicum tribe hold a conspicuous place in the compound: indeed it was its unusual pungency which had lured Johnny to his ruin; he confided to me afterwards in secret, that he had seized on a small branch of bird's-eye, taking them for barbaries, had stripped off four or five of the pods, clapped them into his mouth, and rapidly crunched them between his teeth, to cool his tongue, nipped by the pepper-pot.

A fatal mistake! No wonder he exploded in the verandah; he had fire enough on board to have burst a bomb!

It was memorable; for, was I not introduced to Mary, sangaree, pepper-pot and *granadilla* on that never to be forgotten day?

Jasper was three or four years my senior; he was a big boy when I was a little boy, but still we had many recollections in common, many companions and friends to ask after. And so we sat and chatted over our old school-days, whilst the others, under the guidance of our hostess, wandered into the garden to watch the humming-birds.

"Well," said Jasper, shaking me once more heartily by the hand, as we rose at length to join the others, "I can't tell you how glad I am to see you, Brook; the sight of an old schoolfellow out in this far away land gives me more pleasure than you can imagine."

I responded to this friendly salute with the warmth of heart which I really felt, and told him that the pleasure of meeting was at least as great on my part as on his.

We found the rest of our party seated in an arbour so densely covered with the wealth of tropical vegetation, (amongst which I noted the splendid passion-flower,) that not even one ray from the fierce luminary above could penetrate this shield of nature's forming.

From beneath this sweet refreshing shade we looked out into the burning garden; for truly did it seem to be on fire, as it glowed in the full blaze of the evening sun, gorgeous in all the vivid colouring of tropical flowers and western splendour.

"Ah! there they are! See! one, two, three, four; I really believe they are come in honour of you, Mr. Brook, for we have been sitting anxiously

watching for the last hour in vain for their arrival.

Thus spoke Mrs. Jasper, and, following her extended finger, I perceived, as she said, four humming-birds flitting and fluttering about in the sunlight not ten paces from where we sat.

We watched them for a long time in silent admiration; they were certainly the most beautiful little creatures I had ever seen alive; so rapid in their motions, so minute in appearance, so graceful as they poised themselves in the air over some choice morsel, their wings quivering, and their bodies glittering like precious stones amongst the leaves and flowers.

"How can you have the heart to destroy such beautiful creatures, Mr Holt?" asked Mrs. Jasper.

"I really feel almost ashamed of myself for so doing, when I look at them, as I do now, with an eye of peace," said Harry.

"I am not quite so sure of the eye of peace," laughed Mrs. Jasper; "I rather think I detected a blood-thirsty look just now; but why say almost ashamed? why not quite?"

"Because necessity has no law," replied Harry.

"Are you then condemned to kill humming-birds? or whence the necessity?"

"I am, in a measure, condemned to kill humming-birds; I am an experienced skinner and stuffer, and I dispose of the fruits of the chase, when thus preserved, to advantage. And, without intruding my domestic affairs upon you, Mrs Jasper, I will simply add, not solely for my own advantage."

"I really beg your pardon, Mr. Holt," said Mrs. Jasper earnestly, her kind face suffused with blushes, for having, as she feared, inadvertently touched on some tender point, which, as a stranger, she had no right to approach. "You must think me very rude or very thoughtless; but indeed I had no intention to—I was only thinking of—"

"Your beautiful little favourites," interrupted Harry, with a smile of good-humoured politeness on his handsome countenance; "believe me they are sacred in my eyes; I would not on any account, or for any consideration, make so bad a return for your hospitality as to injure ought belonging to you. The fact is," he continued, anxious to do away with the painful impression of having unwarrantably trenching upon some family secret, which evidently still oppressed Mrs. Jasper, "the fact is, I am a poor man, and although my pay, with strict economy, is sufficient for my own wants, I find it impossible to save anything out of it for the wants of another—my mother, who is a widow with a small pension, and has no one to help her but me; and so I slay and stuff, and—"

"Oh, Mr. Holt!" cried Mrs. Jasper, with tears in her eyes, "how I dislike myself! Kill all my humming-birds, and butterflies, and everything! oh! how could I be so foolish, so inconsiderate?"

"My dear madam, you have been neither, I assure you. It was most natural that you should be surprised at what must have seemed to you the wanton destruction of harmless, happy, young life: and so entirely do I agree with you, that I would not, merely for the sake of a collec-

tion, pursue my blood-thirsty trade, but for my mother—"

"Please don't say any more, Mr. Holt; you forgive me. I feel now as though I had known you for a long time, and so I offer you this:" she stretched out her hand, a tear and a smile struggling for the ascendancy in her soft blue eyes.

"Well," said Jasper, who had been enjoying the scene in his quaint, quiet way, "now that you have 'broken a spear' with my wife, over the humming-birds, Mr. Holt—in which encounter, I am bound to confess, you came off victorious—what do you say to a stroll? the sun is getting low, and we have not much twilight in these latitudes, you know."

The proposition was gladly accepted, and a delightful stroll we had through the sugar canes and maize fields.

"Your plantation is well named, Jasper," I observed, as we walked by the side of a clear, limpid stream.

"Yes; we have plenty of water here: it is a great blessing; I don't know how we should get on in this hotbed without it."

We were amongst the canes. They rose far above our heads; their slender, graceful, many-jointed stalks, leafless to within a foot or two of the top, had a very singular appearance.

We were walking along a broad path, with the canes on each side of us. Certainly it was a strange sight; how unlike anything in England. I suppose my looks must have expressed some such idea, as Jasper remarked, "Rather different from wheat and barley this, eh, Brook?" I acknowledged that it was; but my curiosity was excited. I believe I am naturally of what is called "a curious turn," and I begged he would tell me all about sugar canes—their rise and fall; when were they planted, when were they cut, how old were the canes we were amongst, and in short, the how, the when, and the where of the cultivation of sugar?

It was a modest request. Jasper laughed: "I can't initiate you into cane craft in all its intricacies of manuring, planting, cutting, pressing, boiling, potting, and refining in one lesson; but I will give you just an insight into the mysteries of the art, to satisfy your very commendable thirst for knowledge; at least, if not to satisfy, to take off the sharp edge of curiosity which is, I see, gnawing your intellectual vitals."

I looked foolish, and felt hot. Youth bears ridicule ill; but after all, it was not ridicule—merely "his way:" he could not help bantering a bit.

We had reached the bottom of the canefield, from whence a flight of wooden steps lead over a stile into a road—the veritable road along which we had marched the day before to Stony Hill. I recognised the "Plum Tree Tavern," with its group of mango trees, the fruit of which I had taken for quinces.

"I saw the dust you gentlemen kicked up yesterday along this road," said Jasper. "I had no idea that there was an old schoolfellow of mine amongst you."

"The dust was soon laid," said Harry; "we were properly soaked before we reached Stony Hill."

"Fancy his lack of curiosity, to let a regiment, fresh from England, march past his gates, and not go to see them! I was really quite ashamed of him, it was so inhospitable not to welcome his own countrymen to—to—"

"Ay, to what?" laughed Jasper, interrupting his wife; "to the 'Plum Tree Tavern?' that was at their service, without any welcome from me; and, to tell the truth, I foresaw 'the laying of the dust' Mr. Holt speaks of. There was a terrible black cloud hurrying over the tops of the Ligneæ Mountains; as it was, I got two or three spats in the face from drops the size of saucers, before I reached home."

"You afraid of a little rain, Henry! Don't believe him, Mr. Holt; it was his laziness, nothing else."

"My dear Helen, depend upon it discretion is the better part of curiosity as well as of valour," replied Jasper; "but come," he added, "sit down upon these steps, the rubicon over which I would not pass yesterday, and let me endeavour to enlighten Brook upon the cultivation of the sugar cane."

"Well, you must make haste, Henry," said Mrs. Jasper, "or, however much light you may throw upon the subject, the sugar canes themselves will be in darkness."

"True, lady fair: I will do as you bid me; at the same time, I cannot allow that extremely indifferent attempt at wit on your part, to pass unimproved; now—"

"Henry, be quiet and serious, and go on."

Jasper shook his head, muttered something about not liking to have his hair pulled before company, and then turning to me thus began his enlightenment. "You see these two cane fields, one on each side of the road? Well, each is a specimen, and I flatter myself a fair one, of the two modes of propagating the sugar cane. The cane grows, as you may observe, in joints of greater or lesser length, according to the weather and the soil. One mode of propagation is by means of cuttings of from fifteen or twenty inches in length, according to the nearness of the joints; these cuttings are taken from the tops of the canes just below the leaves; and the sooner they are planted, after cutting, the better. The method of planting is in rows from three to four feet apart, the cuttings being placed in small hillocks about two feet asunder in the rows. The number planted in each hillock depends upon the judgment and opinion of the planter. Some place six or seven cuttings together; instead of which quantity, productive, in my humble opinion, of blights, I plant but two in each hill, and if both take, I draw out the weakest, by this means, in a great measure, preventing blight, and at the same time securing, at least as large a quantity of sugar as I should obtain from half-a-dozen smaller and weaker plants. You see one great desideratum in a cane field is sun and air; plenty of both, to all parts of the growing plant, is absolutely necessary to insure a good crop. It is, therefore, bad policy to have your canes too

thick. I am very particular on this point, and always have the ground marked out by a line, that the rows may be straight and at equal distances: the whole is then divided into pieces of sixty or seventy feet broad, leaving intervals between each of about twenty feet, for the convenience of passage and for the free circulation of air and the free admission of the sun's rays, to all parts of the crop. You understand so far, Brook?"

"Quite," I replied; "but tell me, when do you plant your cuttings? and how long do they take in coming to perfection?"

"I plant them generally in November, and they take about fifteen months to grow and ripen. These canes on the left of the road are from cuttings planted this time last year: they will be fit to cut in February. The other side of the road is an example of the second mode of propagating canes. They are called 'ratoon canes'; they are not cuttings, but canes proceeding from the old stumps; they do not take above a year in coming to perfection; those you see were cut last March, and they will be fit for the cutlass next March, I expect."

"How long do ratoon canes last?" I asked.

"It depends entirely on soil and management, both of which, I flatter myself, are tolerably good on Running Water plantation; my 'busher' is a first-rate hand: all I know I learnt from him. The piece before us has been planted ten years, and has invariably yielded good crops; with care I expect the ratoons will last two or three years yet. In Trelawney, the finest cane soil in Jamaica, (or out of it, I expect,) they seldom have recourse to 'cuttings'; their 'ratoons' last commonly upwards of twenty years without the necessity of replanting."

"That must be a fine soil, Mr. Jasper," said Harry; "what is its nature?"

"It is a pure loam—a brick loam, I should say, with a mixture of clay and sand: it is of a red colour of different shades; when first turned up it has a glossy, shining surface, and if you wet your hand and take up a bit of the fresh soil it will stain your fingers like paint. There is only one description of earth that I ever heard of, even supposed to be equal to the Trelawney soil for growing sugar, and that is the ashy loam of St. Kitt's: the St. Kittites of course say that theirs is the best, and I of course say that ours is."

"Fair enough; but tell me, oh thou learned planter! I can scarcely believe you really are a West Indian planter, Jasper; such a change from 'a Commoner Prefect!' Is age the only standard of maturity? Are you as arbitrary in the time of cutting your canes as the Warden of Winchester used to be with regard to our return to school? must it be 'to the day?' How do you know that the canes will choose to be ripe on that day year from the time you plant them? Is there no flowering? no blossoming?"

"Authorities are divided as to the flowering of the sugar-cane, to answer your last question first," replied Jasper, smiling at my eagerness; "for my part, I think they would flower if we let them stand long enough; and what we call 'the arrowing' of the cane, is in fact the first shoots of the flower; but before it blossoms the cane is cut, for 'arrowing' is one of the symptoms of maturity: another is the

fall of the leaves, which you may observe grow round each joint; these leaves wither and fall as the joint ripens: it is the only and sufficient criterion of the maturity of the joint; the time of cutting is, as I have said, usually after twelve or fifteen months, but varies according to the season and the soil. There, that is pretty well for a first lesson; we shall have you turning planter, and I shall be prosecuted for seducing so promising a young officer from his Majesty's service."

I am not sure that the seeds of dissatisfaction for "the service" were not sown on that eventful evening: dissatisfaction for the idle, useless life of a military man in "the piping times of peace." I looked at Mary Marsden as she sat on the step below me, tossing mangoes up into the air and catching them, after the manner, though without the dexterity, of the practised juggler. Her upturned face, across which eagerness, anxiety, disappointment and delight flitted in rapid succession according to success or failure in the art she was practising, was very beautiful: at least I know I thought so; and I thought besides how pleasant it would be to walk about the sugar-canes, and hunt butterflies and humming-birds in the bush with her every day, and have a snug house like Jasper's to live in, and all that, and more than all that; for in my castle-building I had peopled my castle, and was getting rather anxious with regard to the education of the children—whether to send them to England, or keep them with us—when a mango, riper than the rest, escaping Miss Mary's fingers, descended plump upon her forehead, adown which the yellow juice of the fruit freely flowed. This catastrophe, with the start, the exclamation, the laughter, and the sisterly scolding for staining her clean white frock that followed, effectually (for the time) dispelled my pleasant illusions.

The sun was down, twilight there was none, and so we walked home in the dark, if that can be called darkness in which most things were indistinctly visible; there was no moon, but the clear firmament above, studded with countless hosts of stars, forbade the possibility of darkness.

Amongst the different phenomena of tropical regions, unknown to the inhabitants of the temperate zone, not the least beautiful and astonishing is the extreme clearness of the atmosphere; owing to its highly rarefied nature, objects, as well in the heavens as on the earth, can be distinguished at a distance incredible to the notions or the practice of an European: and never before had I gazed upon such a constellation of heavenly lights as shone down upon me on that night.

My "star-gazing" was suddenly interrupted by a call from Miss Mary: we had become great and sudden friends ever since I had knelt down beside her and helped to wipe off the mango stains from her white frock—a circumstance I had not thought of sufficient importance to mention before; but I feel impelled to account for the evaporation of Miss Mary's first timidity.

"Oh Mr. Brook! do come here?" she cried.

I was by her side in a moment.

We had left the cane-field, and were by the stream before mentioned.

"The bush" was alive with lights; little specks of fire darting and flitting about in all directions.

"Ain't they beautiful? please help me catch one?"

Help her catch one! I should think so; had they been scorpions instead of fire-flies, I would have helped her.

It was easier said than done, though. The air swarmed with them; they circled round the bushes and round our heads in thousands, but not one could we catch for a long time: at length in our eagerness, as we clutched the air for the hundredth time, our hands met upon the self-same leaf around which the lights were dancing merrily.

"Oh Mr. Brook! don't leave go my hand: we have got one, I am sure we have—hold fast!"

I obeyed her, I did not leave go; our hands remained clasped together; I peered in between her fingers, (they were more transparent than mine,) and I saw a bright light, and I felt a tingling sensation in my hand, the like of which I had never before experienced. What was it? Did fire-flies bite or sting?

THE PRESENT AND THE PAST OF HOLYROOD.

SUNK almost in the shadow of Salisbury Crags, which rise beside and above the hoary building like giant battlements of Nature dwarfing the proudest works of men, stands Holyrood Palace. Thus we saw it first from the Regent Road, lying beneath, having the Canongate for its avenue; a quadrangle of grey walls and turrets crowned with conical peaks; the ruins of the Chapel Royal projecting into the green park behind. In front, a broad sandy space, half-circled by high railings, and centred with a fountain in process of erection, after the pattern of one formerly existent at Linlithgow Palace, and which is described in an old travel-book as being "the beautifullest fountain in the world, the shape of an imperial crown, adorned with statues and other carved work." This copy of it, made by her Majesty's command, is twenty-eight feet in height by twenty-four in diameter of the lowest basin; and three stages of flying buttresses produce the effect of a triple crown, surrounded by emblematic heraldic figures, bearing shields charged with armorial bearings of the later Scottish monarchs. It is picturesque, and when the newness of the fair sandstone shall be weathered by a few winters, will be eminently in keeping with the fine old palace.

There is little architectural beauty about Holyrood, except in the remains of the abbey. Churchmen had leisure to cultivate the beautiful, warriors had none, in the stern and stormy times when it originated. For sacred shelter, free from suspicion of violence, kings commonly sojourned at monasteries during their royal progresses; and David I, having founded and endowed Holyrood Abbey for the canons of St. Augustine, his successors exacted from them a quit-rent of hospitality. James IV, finding the dimensions of the monastery smaller than might contain his retinue, built a palace hard

by; and the first queen who trod therein was Margaret Tudor, his English bride, through whom were the two nations to be fused into the mighty realm called Great Britain. Palmy days for Holyrood ensued, until the disaster at Flodden cast Scotland into a long and turbulent minority. Its next festivity was the arrival of the beauteous Magdalen, daughter of Francis I., to reign for a brief space of forty days; when she, being "seiklie," was deposed from her royal state by the resistless hand of Death, and laid in the Abbey Church, while the people testified their grief by a universal mourning. We looked into the vault this day, iron-barred across the mouth, nothing but darkness and dust within.

The Sieur de Brantôme, coming over with Mary Queen of Scots in 1561, and generally disgusted with everything Scottish, yet calls Holyrood "a handsome building, not like anything else in this country." He saw the palace at its best, when the now silent quadrangle glittered with the chivalry of Scotland, come to render homage and devoir to the beautiful queen; and many a day he rode in her train through this deep western archway, as she followed her favourite diversion of falconry. Alas that the sunny morning should so soon be darkened over with clouds of crime and of pain!

The western front, before which we stand, is 215 feet in length: massive square towers at either end, having the corners rounded off by circular turrets. In the north tower, looking towards the Calton Hill, are the apartments rendered famous by the tragedies of Mary's life. Passing between the Doric columns adorning the grand entrance, we enter the quadrangle, which is surrounded by a cloister of nine arches at each side. Southward and eastward are the plate glass windows of the royal apartments, now occupied by the Prince of Wales: above these, the rooms appertaining to the Marquis of Breadalbane, Hereditary Grand Chamberlain of Scotland. We turn to the left, and a gloomy doorway admits us presently to the picture gallery.

Verily, a noble chamber! one hundred and fifty feet in length, by twenty-four in breadth: and here Charles Edward Stuart held levees and balls during his brief power. But round the walls hang a series of pictured forgeries, purporting to be portraits of a hundred kings of Scotland, the which were painted by a Fleming, on contract from the government of Charles II., they providing him with the "originals!" And certainly the family resemblance is very striking about the nose, which, as Sir Walter Scott justly remarks, in each and every one is like the knocker of a door. Two pictures at the east end of the gallery are worth attention, as being authentic portraits of Margaret of Denmark and her husband James III. Though executed in the bald style of art to be expected in Scotland four hundred years ago, while as yet even Hans Holbein was not, still, some of the details are well worked out, and observable for beauty of finish. The windows close by look on the buttresses of the Chapel Royal; and a stalk of purple snapdragon waved in the wind from a broken arch while we gazed forth, as if, with the gentle intent

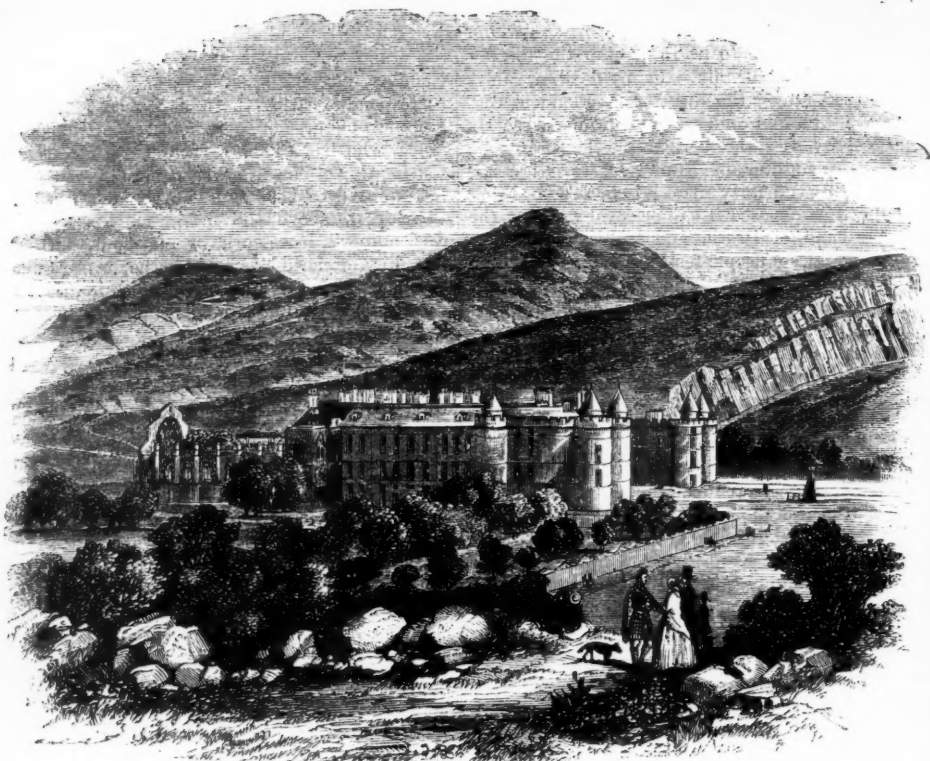
of flowers, it would help to cover the decay of what was once great and strong.

Pass we to Lord Darnley's rooms: his audience-chamber, sleeping-apartment, and dressing-rooms, corresponding with those of Queen Mary above. Here are pictures of some note: a portrait of John Knox, who has a noble countenance, albeit stern; Cardinal Beaton, a clever square face, and cool intriguing eyes beneath a churchman's cap. Also Charles II., above the fire-place, his black wig descending in loose curls over armour, and covering his forehead almost to the eyes; bloated sensualist in every line and curve of his dark face. Subsequently, in Lord Breadalbane's apartments, we saw a group of royal children by Vandyck, among whom one chubby black-eyed boy attracted particular admiration; and that was the little Stuart, afterwards Charles II! Who but regrets when the clear sparkling rivulet becomes the great putrid river, carrying in its bosom all imagined vileness?

A private stair, in the thickness of the wall, leads from the north turret room upwards to Queen Mary's apartments, and downwards to the east side of the tower. Climbing these winding stone steps, along the same track as Rizzio's assassins went, we reach a door behind the arras of the queen's bed-chamber; and the turning of a corner brings us into the celebrated little supper-room where that deed of outrage and blood was begun. A very small chamber it is, about ten feet square, the door low—grim Ruthven must have stooped to enter. Truly the conspirators had their victim at bay here—not a chance of escape for the boldest or the wildest, not space even for a struggle. Torn and discoloured fragments of hangings yet shiver aloft; near the window lies the white marble block on which Mary kneeled in the chapel when plighting her troth to Darnley—a stepping-stone to that other block at Fotheringay, twenty-one years after. Armour reputed to have been Darnley's is on the table: among the rest an iron helmet, which verily would cause severe ache to our degenerate modern brows. Let us enter Queen Mary's bed-room.

Arras dropped over this low door; thus representing continuously the mythic tale of Phaeton's rash charioting; but the story is nearly blotted out: only the waving of a garment or the plunging of a steed is traceable here and there through the discolouration. All the room looks faded, darkened, as if the shadow of its history gloomed over it. The crimson bed, once richly handsome, is frail, tarnished, worn by the fingers of centuries; black chairs stand about it; a small flat basket, once a *gaze d'amitié* from Elizabeth, and which is said to have held the baby-clothes of James I., rests beside it. Elizabeth herself, the Fate of Mary's life, looks down from a corner of the room—her portrait another of the little gifts which often passed between these queens, for that they dearly loved each other. Henry VIII's familiar figure is beside his daughter's: a strong resemblance betwixt them, which lies deeper than features.

Among other faded things in this room, is a piece of silk embroidery worked by Mary, representing Jacob's dream. The angels are in hoops



HOLYROOD PALACE.

and farthingales, so far as can be discerned. Armorial bearings hung above this, in the embrasure, have a curious inscription—

"The arms of Mary Quene Delphines of France,
The nobildest Ladie on earth for till advance,
Of Scotland Quene, and of England also,
Of Ireland also. God hath provided so."

Her dressing-room and oratory correspond with the supper-room before mentioned, in the opposite turret. The tapestry here is in much better preservation; some of the foliage and drapery is finely wrought and distinct. Here hangs a very ancient mirror, which must have often reflected those lovely lineaments that have inspired poets and artists in all subsequent ages. An arch sunk in the wall contained the altar. The deeply embrasured window looks out across the west front of the palace, to Salisbury Crags. They, at least, are unchanged since she gazed hence three hundred years ago.

The Audience Chamber has associations with another unfortunate Stuart; it contains the bed of Charles I, curtained with embossed velvet, lined once with amber satin. Its splendour is paltry now. Without in the lobby are discoloured patches on the flooring, where Rizzio lay a night before any hand dared prepare for him the common offices of burial. Ordinary homesteads have no such ghastly memories haunting their corridors; if devoid of the grandeur and the fame, they are also exempt from the notoriety of evil.

Thus we moralise as we pass down the broad staircase, with loop-holes occasionally in the massive walls, and, again reaching the quadrangle, proceed to the chapel. It is only a fragment: transepts and choir are totally destroyed; but what remains is deeply interesting. Above the doorway is an inscription, nearly obliterated, placed there by Charles I—

"He shall build ane House for my name, and I will establish the throne of his Kingdom for ever."

The man was no good prophet who selected such quotation as appropriate. Holyrood is intertwined with the history of the Stuarts' decline and fall.

David I was of course the original builder of the chapel. He might well be styled "a sair sanct for the crown," as in his reign originated most of the great monastic establishments in Scotland, to endow which he alienated much royal property. This chapel was maltreated by various parties during the Border Wars, and in 1688, even the vaults were ransacked by the populace. Finally, the roof fell in a century since, which completed the ruin.

The east window is partially filled with quatrefoil tracery, and would much remind the eye of one accustomed to flowers, of twined rose-sprays with the naked thorns half curving towards each other. In some places the walls are arcaded, and every pillar has a diverse capital, commonly of foliage. How those old artists seem to have

revelled in the endless variety and gracefulness of forest leaves!

Let us recall a few of the scenes which have passed in this chapel of Holyrood. What pageants of brightness, what solemnities of grief! James II was crowned here, a child-king of six years old; Mary of Gueldres, his wife, here married and was crowned, twelve years subsequently. The same king, shattered by a burst cannon, was buried beside the altar which had thus witnessed the three chief acts of his life. The nuptials of James III with Margaret of Denmark; the high ceremonial when Pope Julius's legate conferred upon James IV a crown and jewelled sword (yet shown in the regalia); the funeral procession of Magdalene de Valois, bride of James V; the marriage of Mary and Darnley; the coronation of Charles I: these are a few of the scenes which the old walls could narrate, had they a voice.

The pavement is chiefly tombs—some wrought in the manner termed incised, being outlines graven in the level slab: crosses, swords, armorial bearings, may yet be deciphered. The noblest dust in Scottish history—so far as birth and power make noble—sleeps here. In the single complete tower is the mural monument of Lord Belhaven: his statue, partially recumbent, in robes and coronet, is a careful work of art. He was the intimate friend of Henry, eldest brother of Charles I. A tablet on one of the pillars of the south aisle commemorates Adam Bothwell, Bishop of Orkney, who celebrated the disastrous nuptials of his namesake with Mary Queen of Scots: not here, but in the council hall of the palace, on the May morning at four o'clock. An epitaph as expressive as any other lengthier one in the chapel is the following, under date 1592:—"Heir lyis ane honest woman calet Marget Baxter, spous to Bartel Hamelton, Burges of ye Canengait."

Disjointed bosses, fragments of floriated cornice, and broken column-shafts lie about; also in the south aisle, two stone coffins were lately found, once probably laid away with all the pomp of an abbot's funeral. A unicorn "cunningly carved in stone" leans against the wall, deposed from its high dignity over the entrance of James V's palace, where it acted as supporter to the royal arms. This is the last thing seen as we leave the chapel, and along the piazza to the right, we proceed to Lord Breadalbane's apartments, in that part of the palace erected by Charles II. The principal attraction is a fine collection of portraits, many by Vandyck, Lely, and Raeburn; also a piece of tapestry representing one of Alexander's battles with Darius: Bucephalus's head is all but breathing.

Other parts of the palace are private. The Dukes of Hamilton and Argyll have each suites of apartments within its walls. Debtors may still take sanctuary in the abbey domains, and a law officer appointed by the former duke—who is Hereditary Keeper of Holyrood—grants them immunity from arrest, except for debts contracted while within the bounds. Perhaps a score persons yearly, on an average, avail themselves of this privilege, a relic of feudal times.

Queen Victoria has done much for Holyrood, in

rescuing it from the neglect which was fast wearing away the palace of her ancestors. And the present residence of the Prince of Wales within its time-honoured precincts is a circumstance particularly gratifying to all classes of her Scottish subjects.

A NIGHT AMONG CHINESE PIRATES.

EVERYBODY knows that the coasts of China are sadly infested with pirates. Of this ugly fact I was forcibly reminded as I stood on the deck of the good ship S—, in which I was about to set sail from Hong Kong to Amoy. As we were about to weigh anchor, a boat came alongside, from which several Chinese sailors clambered on deck, and inquired for the captain. Having found him, they explained that they had been deputed by the captains of eight junks which were bound for Kap-Che, to ask whether he would consent to be their convoy for protection against the pirates. Our captain having a well-armed ship, and being an old naval officer, was nothing loth to undertake the task. The two passengers (myself and another) offering no objection, the bargain was soon concluded, and we set sail. As the old barque stood out of the harbour, with her eight clumsy-looking little junks around her, she looked very much like a hen with her chickens. The ten guns that peeped out from her port-holes, however, qualified her to act the part of the cock should occasion require.

For the first four days of our voyage the only enemy we had to contend with was the strong head-wind, against which neither we nor our convoy could make much progress. Every evening at sunset we were obliged, in compliance with the timorous usage of Chinese sailors, to come to an anchor in some bight or bay. To men accustomed to travel by steam, this seemed slow work; yet I did not regret it, since it afforded me opportunities of going ashore to visit several towns and villages on the coast, which are rarely seen by Europeans. Wretched enough these outlying villages looked. With their mud-built houses, their few and dingy shops, their narrow and filthy streets, where fat pigs strolled about, and children, scarcely less fat, were their companions, they gave the visitor no very exalted idea of the so-called Celestial Empire. These sea-coast villages, however, mean-looking as they are, would in less populous empires rank as cities. They owe their existence to the fisheries, which are so industriously prosecuted along the whole seaward of China.

But to return to our voyage. The wind, which for four days had so retarded our progress, on the fifth increased to something like a gale. Our poor junks, and our puissant selves, had enough ado to hold our own. In the teeth of such a gale, progress was out of the question, and a safe anchorage for the night was the chief anxiety. The only safe anchorage which seemed at all available, was that marked in the charts as Mico Bay. To reach that was the object for which we and our junks now toiled hard. If we could only get round that head-land, we should be safe. But no! tack after tack still found us on the wrong side of that bluff cape;

and at last we were forced to come to anchor in a small and exposed bight outside of that Mico Bay which had been our "desired haven."

While we were dropping anchor, the ship's carpenter (a Chinaman) came up to the captain, and with a look of importance in his face said, "That no good ship," pointing to a strange junk, which was just then crossing our bows; "she a pirate."

"Pirate!" exclaimed the captain, taking up his telescope and surveying the junk indicated. "I see no signs of piracy about her."

The carpenter walked off, evidently in a huff at the little importance attached to his warning; and the suspected junk dropped anchor alongside of one of our convoy.

Night fell, and as dark a night as evil-doer could wish. About nine o'clock, while I was trudging up and down the quarter-deck with our captain, our eyes were dazzled by a flash, followed instantly by the report of a gun. We stood still, looking rather than saying, "What can be the meaning of that?" Presently there came another and another and another of these ominous sounds. Our captain rushed off, mustered all hands, gave orders to load all the guns, and clear for action. While this was being done—and it was the work of a very few minutes—the firing was still going on all around us; though, whether it was directed against our ship or others we could not tell. To find myself—peace-loving man as I am—thus suddenly surrounded by "war's alarms," was not a little astonishing. Nor was my confidence restored when, on going into the cabin, I found the first mate busied over the open arm-chest and powder magazine, handing out pistols, muskets, cutlasses, cartridges, and other death-dealing articles. Man of peace though I was and am, I selected a cutlass, thinking that in an emergency it would be well to have a weapon for self-defence.

Thus armed, I regained the deck, and found that the firing, though less frequent, was still going on. "Fire right in amongst them!" was the fiery young mate's exhortation to our old captain. "No, no," replied the captain; "when we can distinguish friends from foes, we'll fire; but not till then."

At length the firing ceased, and darkness and silence returned. Still we retained the impression that pirates were somewhere close upon us, and that we must be on the alert, lest, as is their custom, they should stealthily approach, clamber up the ship's stern, and take us by surprise. All that night the matches were kept lit, the men lay by their guns, and the captain and myself paced the deck. A weary long night it seemed! But day broke at last. Peering through its first grey light, we counted our junks and found them all there. But where was the stranger which the carpenter had pointed out as a pirate?

"There she is!" cried the mate, "hugging the shore and making her escape!"

The carpenter being called, was asked, "Is that the junk you pointed out last night?"

"Yes," was the quick reply.

Several guns were soon brought to bear on the fugitive. The word "fire!" was given, and our first shot skipped along the waves, but fell short.

The second was not more successful. The third struck and disabled the rover for a time; but she soon righted again, and stood away beyond further annoyance from our shot.

The daylight being now clear, the captain ordered a boat to be lowered, and boarded one of our junks to inquire into the cause of last night's uproar. He was told that the junk which had just sailed away had attacked one of our convoy, but had been beaten off with the loss of several men.

And so ended our night of anxiety and suspense. But do not suppose, dear reader, that my story is ended; for on that same day we saw a steamer rounding that headland which we had laboured so hard to round and had not been able. What steamer she was, or what was her errand to Mico Bay, we knew not. On our arrival at our destination, however, we ascertained that the steamer in question was Her Majesty's Ship "Media;" and that her mission to Mico Bay was the destruction of a whole fleet of piratical junks—a mission which she most effectually accomplished by sinking or blowing up twenty-five junks, killing about five hundred pirates, and taking prisoners two hundred more, who were executed at Canton. Had we succeeded in our attempt to get into the anchorage of Mico Bay, we and our convoy would probably have fallen a prey (though not an easy prey) to the piratical fleet. Let this little incident in my life remind us afresh of Him who "redeemeth our life from destruction."

THE MONTHS IN THE COUNTRY.

OCTOBER.

We draw up the curtain upon the month of October, in the heart of a rural orchard of old apple trees, and reveal one of the prettiest and pleasantest sights which the country can afford at this season of the year. The old trees were planted somewhat arbitrarily, long before the modern notions of planting were current, and for more than one generation they have been suffered to have their own way; all the assistance they have derived from man being some occasional lopping and the advantage of a prop here and there under their long projecting branches, when the fruit grew heavy, to save them from snapping short with their burdens. You note that one of the old trees has fallen flat on its side, notwithstanding these timely props; perhaps it was overthrown by some equinoctial storm. But fallen and prostrate though it be, the gallant old "russet" has no thought of dying: instead of doing so, it has shot out new roots along the whole length of its trunk into the ground below, and new branches into the air above, and is bearing a famous crop of russetings, as well on the old limbs as the new. Some of the ancient trees which yet stand firm in the ground, present the most grotesque figures to the view; you would think, to look at them, that it was impossible they should ever bear fruit, so ragged, broken, decayed, bulbous and distorted are their trunks and larger branches—so mossy with age and so gouty and crippled in the limbs; yet there is the fruit, ripe, mellow, and ruddy,

hanging upon them by bushels, and bending by its weight the sturdy props put up to sustain it. The ground you tread on is more a carpet of spongy moss than a sward of grass; but you can scarcely see what it is, for the piles of apples which cover it thickly in so many places, and to which fresh accumulations are being heaped every moment. A company of men and young girls are busy in shaking down and plucking the ripe fruit from the trees; ladders are carefully placed against the branches, while some of the younger and more active lads have climbed into the more topmost boughs, inaccessible by any other means, and, rifling them of their treasures, drop them as they gather them into the baskets or aprons of the girls beneath. The baskets as fast as they are filled are emptied to increase the heaps upon the ground; and as soon as one tree is stripped of all its blushing honours, the merry workers, with many a laugh and time-honoured joke, move on with their ladders and baskets to the next to repeat the process.

As for the apples, which are all destined to be made into cider, they will lie on the ground in the orchard for some days, perhaps even for some weeks, until the frosts, which are now pretty regular during the hour or so that precedes the dawn, have laid hold of them, and changed a portion of their substance into substance of a more saccharine quality, and thus perspectively improved the flavour of the cider that is to be. At the right time the apples will be thrown into the mill and ground into pulp or "must;" the "must" will be inclosed in hair-cloths and subjected to the squeezing of the cider-press; and the juice being led off, will have to undergo the ticklish processes of fermentation and fining, and, according to the care, watchfulness, and ability brought to bear upon the business, may either turn out a delicious nectar, almost equal to the fruit of the grape, or a sour, acrid, smatch-ridden beverage, tolerable only to rustic palates. The business of cider-making is always one of considerable uncertainty, and appears to be but indifferently understood even in the cider-making districts, if we are to judge from the constantly varying flavour and value of the products of the same localities in different years. Perry is made from pears by a process analogous to, and almost the same in detail, as that which converts apples into cider; but its results are said to be from year to year more certainly satisfactory.

To the fanciful eye, nearly all the trees of the field appear loaded with fruit in October; the leaves have now the mellow look of ripe apples, and are tinged with red and brown hues, which, as the month grows older, take the place of the green and supersede it altogether. This is a favourite season with the artist, who likes now to take his colours into the woods, and copy the gorgeous tinting which heralds the fall of the leaf and the coming of winter. That clear transparency in the air, which was so remarkable last month, now begins to give place to mists, which are the result of partial congelation, and which, from the cool tone they impart to the atmosphere, heighten by contrast the effect of the warm hues of the foliage. The sky, where not cloudy, grows of a deeper blue; banks of rain-clouds

are seen forming near the horizon, and in all the aerial phenomena of this month there is a striking resemblance to those of April—with the exception, however, that the changes from wet to dry, from sunshine to shower, are not so frequent or so sudden. Sometimes there is another exception, and it is a welcome one when it comes: it will happen now and then, that so soon as the equinoctial gales have blown off, the weather remains calm, sunny, and almost cloudless during nearly the whole of the month.

This state of things, however, though highly acceptable, is not so frequent in our climate as it is on the continent, or in the back settlements of North America, in which last-named region, indeed, it occurs with undeviating regularity, and affords an excellent opportunity to the inhabitants to prepare for the rigours of their long season of frost. When, after a week or two of this second summer, there comes a sudden change of wind, bringing showers and gloom, we seem to step all at once into the horrors of winter. The dead leaves shower down in masses, covering the ground; among them lie the acorns, the beech-mast, and the split prickly globes of the horse-chestnut, with the polished reddish-brown fruit shining like gems in the soft muddy soil.

At this crisis the farmer and the breeder who has the privilege of doing so, will turn his swine into the forest, that they may fatten upon the spoils which autumn scatters thus liberally upon the ground. These hungry, all-devouring gentry are sometimes in charge of a swineherd, who will rear with hurdles a short fenced fold for their reception at night, and lead them out to the pastures by day. In a little time the pigs learn to do without his guidance, and will wander for miles foraging for themselves, returning invariably at sundown, each in the rear of some experienced hog, to the shelter of the fold. They are not very ceremonious on these occasions; we remember, one fine October day, being seated at a pic-nic nutting dinner, when, turning a glance towards a fine large pound-cake, which was waiting for the dessert, we beheld it in the act of disappearing down the throats of a dozen young porkers, who had nosed it from a distance, and who could only be prevailed upon to retreat by a shower of camp-stools launched at their heads from a dozen hands at once. A month in the forest at this season of "mast and pannage" does a good deal for piggy in the way of qualifying him for the butcher. The reader may perhaps remember that this mode of fattening swine is as old as any custom of this country—much older than our laws, or even our oldest ruins: it was common among our Saxon ancestors, and is frequently mentioned in "Domesday Boke."

October is rather a quiet month down at Tangley, it being now comparatively a leisure time. Not but that there is sufficient work for the regular hands: there are the swedes to be pulled, and lugged home for winter use, as well as the carrots and beet-root. Then there are the potatoes to be dug and housed, at which hard work, if you look for her, you will find Nelly Bunce, armed with a three-pronged digger, and toiling as busily as ever.

The experimental potatoes, to Dobbs's great satisfaction, have turned out famously; they are not quite so big, perhaps, as might have been wished, but they are firm, solid, and smooth, and there is no visible sign of the disease to be detected in one of them. Dobbs will keep a good part of them for seed, and will send a sack or two to the Squire, who has made inquiries concerning them, and who will be glad of them for the same purpose. The ploughs are all still at work, and a good deal of wheat is in the ground; so that Billy Bunce is wanted again at his old vocation of "bird-boy," and is doing his best with lungs and clapper to keep off the hungry depredators from the buried treasure. Up in the wood on the hill, the strokes of the woodman's axe are resounding from dawn to sunset. Not only is fresh timber being felled for the benefit of the Squire, but old Giles and young Giles are both up there digging out the root-blocks left in the ground all the summer, and by dint of axes, sledge-hammers, and steel wedges, splitting them up into fragments and logs, to augment the stock of winter fuel for the farm. Then there is not a little to be done in the repair of fences, drains, and ditches, and putting all things snug before the advent of foul weather, which cannot be far off.

At the Hall, the Squire has got company, who have been there some weeks, and may stay some weeks longer. To-day they will hunt the fox; and if we traverse the wood to the left, leaving the copse and the marsh behind us, we shall come out on the brow which commands a good view of Tangley Bottom, where the "meet" comes off. Hark! already you may hear the cry of the hounds, the hallo of the man in the cover, and the cracking of heavy whip-thongs. From this point you see them: that is the old Squire yonder on the tall grey; he is red-coated like the rest; by his side is his barrister son from Gray's Inn; and around them, prancing, curveting, and rearing on their impatient steeds, are some thirty red-coats besides. Those ladies in the carriages drawn up by the gate are also visitors from London, come to see the start, though they cannot participate in the sport. Yonder, in the gorse to the right, you see the whippers-in beating about for the fox, who appears in no hurry to break cover, though, as he is known to be lurking there, and his hole has been stopped for him, he will have to take to his heels before long. See how the throng increases every minute, as fresh arrivals gallop in.

Positively, there is Dobbs himself in hunting gear, and mounted on his bay mare; and there comes Cousin Brown after him, who ran down from London last night on purpose to join the hunt. But see how the whole group suddenly scatters, and what a din comes up from the rabble of horses, dogs, and men! Ha! there goes the fox off towards the downs, with a good start, and the whole pack open-mouthed after him. What rearing and pawing, and hooting and yelling; what shouting and tallyho-ing, as, darting from the ground, each rider seeks to isolate himself from the press, and get a clear run for it. But where is the fox? Already the hounds are at fault; the cunning brute

has made for the ravine and doubled down the stream, and thrown off the scent. No, there he goes again, up Hodman Rise, the hounds after him, and the hunters doing the best they can with the ravine. Some of the young bloods fly clean across—some, less daring, diverge and cross lower down, while others, suspecting that Reynard will take a course to the left, ride forward in that direction. Dobbs and the old Squire are among the latter party, and by and by their numbers are increased by a lot of young farmers mounted on their own hacks, who know that they will have to ride warily and husband the powers of their steeds, if they would not be thrown out. Long after the dappled pack have vanished over the hill, we hear the jangle of their voices, which is music to the ear of the huntsman, but which comes to us mingled with the shrill shriek of more than one cruelly beaten hound, quailing under the thong of the whippers-in, as they lash the laggards to the work.

While they are gone on their errand of deathful sport, we will jot down a sporting anecdote which may not be exactly to the taste of the persecutors of poor Reynard. A staid and reverend friend of ours, who has long since passed away, and who was the last man upon earth whom one would have supposed capable of a practical joke, was returning one evening from a visit to a poor parishioner, when he heard the cry of the hounds in the wood below. He looked over the low stone road-fence, and saw poor Reynard toiling in the last agonies of exhaustion up the hill towards him, and the miserable condition of the poor tormented brute raised his ire against the pursuers. The fainting creature managed to crawl through a hole in the wall, and then fell dead before our friend, right in his path. The dogs were brawling below, having temporarily missed the scent through the intervention of a brook. Following a momentary, perhaps a morbid impulse, the good man slipped from his horse, drew a knife from his pocket, cut off the brush from the dead fox, remounted, and rode away with it at full trot, without caring to witness the wrathful demonstrations of the hunter, who, coming in first at the death, should find his trophy wanting.

Reverting to our friends and favourites, the birds, we may record that the migration of the swallow tribes that commenced last month continues through a good part of this, when the martins in vast numbers are following their example. Naturalists are fond of observing their proceedings at this interesting crisis, and one of them has given us a description of a feathered exodus on a grand scale, which we shall quote for the satisfaction of the reader. "For some weeks previous to their departure, the tribes began to assemble in the neighbourhood of Rotherham, at the willow-ground near the glass-house, preparatory to their migration to a warmer climate, and their numbers were daily augmented until they became a vast flock which no man could easily number—thousands upon thousands, tens of thousands and myriads—so great indeed, that the spectator would almost have concluded that the whole of the swallow race were there collected in one huge host. It was their manner, while there, to rise from the willows in

the morning, a little before six o'clock, when their thick columns literally darkened the sky. Their divisions were formed into four, five, and sometimes six grand wings, each of these filing off and taking a different route—one east, another west, another south, and so on; as if not only to be equally dispersed throughout the country, to provide food for their numerous troops, but also to collect with them whatever of their fellows or straggling parties might still be left behind. Just before the respective columns arose, a few birds might be observed in motion at different points, darting through their massy ranks: these appeared like officers giving the word of command. In the evening, about five o'clock, they began to return to their station, and continued coming in from all quarters until nearly dark. It was here that you might see them go through their various aerial evolutions, in many a sportive ring and airy gambol, strengthening their pinions in these playful feats for their long ethereal journey, while contentment and cheerfulness reigned in every breast, and were expressed in their evening song by a thousand pleasing twitters from their little throats as they cut the air and frolicked in the last beams of the setting sun, or lightly skimmed the surface of the glassy pool. The notes of those who had already gained the willows sounded like the murmur of a distant waterfall, or the dying roar of the retreating billow on the sea-beach.

"Summer had already given place to autumn, and the leaves were now fast falling from their branches, while the naked tops of many of the trees appeared: the golden sheaves were safely lodged in the barns, and the reapers had for this year shouted their harvest-home; frosty and misty mornings now succeeded, the certain presages of the approach of winter. These omens were understood by the swallows as the route for their march; accordingly, on the morning of the 7th of October, their mighty army broke up its encampment, debouched from their retreat, and, rising, covered the heavens with their legions; thence, directed by an unerring guide, they took their trackless way.

Among the birds which arrive at our coasts in this month, are the wild goose and the woodcock, both of which are welcomed by the sportsman and the gourmand, and, as well as the pheasant, whose day of doom is the first of October, form capital additions to the larder. Among the birds which depart, are the land-rail, the water-rail, and the redstart. Many of the birds which through spring and summer feed on slugs, worms, insects, and living creatures, now have recourse in great part to a vegetable diet, and subsist almost entirely on the ripened berries and seeds of various kinds of plants found in the woods, fields, and hedgerows. By this economical provision of Nature they are made the instruments of disseminating seeds which otherwise would fall to the ground where they ripen, and destroy one another in their endeavours to grow. The seed devoured by the birds is not necessarily affected in its germinating power by passing through their bodies, but takes root and grows wherever it happens to be dropped on a favourable soil.

Thousands of other seeds not thus borne about by birds have wings of their own, whose buoyancy renders them the sport of the winds, which carry them even to enormous distances: such are the seeds of the thistle, the dandelion, the groundsel, etc.; while others, again, are armed with hooks, with which they lay hold of any passing object or animal, and are thus carried to the locality of their future growth. These modes of dissemination together, doubtless with others with which we are not acquainted, are going on throughout the whole of this month, and, indeed, it appears to be the chief business which Nature has in hand at this particular season.

The insect world have grown sadly sluggish and inactive, and whole tribes of them have disappeared from view. The spiders are still busy in their shambles, and their snares often remain spread for the winged game until the frost, following on the moisture which collects on their webs, scatters the whole fabric at once in viewless fragments. From observations we have made, it would seem that the smallest, and apparently the most fragile of the winged races, are the most enduring; for, long after moth, butterfly, wasp, bee, and beetle have vanished, we have encountered whole swarms of gnats sporting merrily even in the faint and sickly glare of a November sun.

October rarely dies out without some blustering indications of the gloomy season which follows it; and we part from it with the more regret, because we know that there are many dreary months to pass over before the rural landscape shall fairly smile again.

RECOLLECTIONS OF CHATEAUBRIAND.

A MEDITATIVE man who loves to deliver himself up to a strain of uncompressed emotions, to court them as one courts spring zephyrs, with no more effort—by a simple exposure of himself to their fanning and soothing influences; or to feast upon mental visions as one feasts upon a glorious landscape, by the mere exertion of letting his eyes rove unconstrained over the expanse of nature—all outward objects and inward sensations thus brought into act, soon blending into one indistinct, puzzling charm with which he is himself identified and intoxicated; a man of such a temperament—and it is by no means an uncommon one—is a great haunter of the residences of the *names* of great men. This is his delight *par excellence*. The house, the garden, the park, the blind alley, the garret, which have been inhabited by those now passed away, who have taught him first to feel and to think, are to him chosen spots to which his feet most willingly tend. In each of these he enters, as it were, into a complete mansion of ruminations already prepared for his reception, and he loses himself as in a labyrinth among them, wandering from object to object, fixed and rapt in a gentle spell which bereaves thought of the power of thinking, or rather bathes it in an odorous vapour-bath of such kindly commingled, that they become indefinable, emotions.

Now, be it known to you, reader, that I am myself greatly addicted in holiday hours to indulging in these ruminations, to delivering myself up to impressions which come and go like the airs of heaven; and that, during a long sojourn in France, I have visited most of the famed localities of that land. The only exception to the pleasure these pilgrimages have given me, I experienced in a visit I paid many years ago to the Hermitage at Montmorenci, the abode of the unhappy Jean Jaques Rousseau; for, in spite of the eloquence, genius, and misery of that singular being; in spite of the delicious nook in which his little nest is embowered, although I was shown the very spot which served him as his summer study—a little eglantine bower, built, or rather growing, in an exquisite little garden, with a verdant carpet, chequered with sun and shade by the most graceful plants before it, and a little rill of clear water sending up a sparkling jet and quickening sound to mingle with its happy murmur, in spite, I say, of the enchantment of this scene, and of all the associations it brought with it, the recollection of the *man* who had inhabited it, turned my delight into disgust, and made me feel almost sick of human nature itself. I cannot bear to hear of the *sensibility* of this man. The health of his mind was wrecked by vice.

I had not intended to say so much, or, indeed, anything of Rousseau, but designed to speak of one who resembles him not at all—M. de Chateaubriand. I happened, however, to visit the Hermitage and the retreat of Chateaubriand for the first time on the same day, and this has associated the two names together in my recollections.

Chateaubriand passed the last days of his life in Paris in an old patrimonial house in the Rue d'Enfer, close to the barrier of that name. It is a quarter which, though within the walls, seems to be quite beyond the life and activity of the city, and was thus peculiarly in character with its renowned inhabitant, who was, when I saw him, a survivor of his age—no participator in its actual concerns. The house itself was equally characteristic: it spoke something of the ancient noble, and something of the poor poet. It is a building of seemly size, and very ancient. It stands in an open space, which partakes partly of the nature of a forest and partly of that of a garden, which has an odd effect. Its *porte cochère* advances about thirty paces in front of the house, and has some fine old architectural devices about it. Its porter-lodges, at each side of the gate, seemed quite deserted, but had a most aristocratical look. The long ranges of kitchens and stables, fallen partly into ruin, told also a tale of departed splendour. All was so dusky and so quiet within the court, that it was hard to fancy the mansion at all inhabited. The shutters, doors, windows, and walls seemed to have been unconscious of a new face of paint for many years. Yet the cleanliness all around and within was scrupulous, and there was every appearance of order and regularity, though there was not certainly much alacrity in the service of the domestics, who appeared to consider the house as their own proper burrow, and did not allow themselves willingly to be disturbed.

Visiting Chateaubriand almost always in the morning, I usually found him quite *en déshabille*, in a long brown loose surtout or dressing-gown, in trousers as unconscious of braces as those erewhile of Sir Charles Wetherell, with shirt-collar flowing over his coat, unhindered by cravat or button, with bare throat, and head covered with a brown worsted cap with a red border. M. de Chateaubriand was very short in stature, not much, though a little, taller than his contemporary, our Irish poet, Moore, and his address was by no means peculiar; it was simply frank and cordial. But the play of his countenance, his bright brown eyes and sparkling look, reflecting every passing emotion, gave great youthfulness to the old man's face. I never before saw very advanced age look so young. Indeed, there was a buoyancy and juvenility in his conversation which made one forgive and almost forget the egregious vanity, or rather egotism, which seemed perpetually to animate him.

Such small facts about him, and such scraps of his table-talk as I am able to collect from notes made many years ago, I now lay before your readers.

M. de Chateaubriand spoke often to me about England, and made frequently excellent observations. "All English institutions," he said, on one occasion, "take the form of concentric circles, of which each has its chief; the opposition itself is aristocratic; the monarchy is merely an oligarchy. Nevertheless, the government, such as it is, will never perish but by the aristocracy. It has nothing to fear from democracy. By the nullity of the monarchy, and the power of the aristocracy, it happens that there is no court in England; that is, no gentleman will consent to bend servilely under a master. Hence there are no courtiers, no court intrigues. This aristocracy is a natural one; it is enlightened and full of talent. Take away from its members their rank and their possessions, and they would still be, by their personal merit, at the pinnacle of society."

After a short silence, he continued: "The nobility of England, though vanquished with Charles Stuart, was not in consequence destroyed. The noble order remained, and became a peerage, after having sustained a revolution without losing its rights. The French nobility, on the contrary, perished completely under the guillotine. They were exterminated by the hangman. The order here has become completely extinct, and from its ashes have arisen mere phantoms, without privileges, without recollections, pale shades, which brush against and shrink from military plebeian intruders, who have nothing either but their frown to awe them—the frown of recent but also past power."

Passing rapidly to another subject: "If I had to choose the place of my residence," he exclaimed. "I would live at Rome. There, all is ruin, all is recollection. If you issue from the wrecks of a past world, you get into the vast campagna of the environs, where all is solitude and silence. From the midst of the tall yellow herbs which cover these deserted plains, you see some solitary column rearing its elegant form like a tapering

palm-tree before you. You see droves of wild horses coming to quench their thirst in the Tiber. Under the fine warm sky you feel life more intensely; you breathe better; the sun seems to clothe you, and a balmy heat spreads through your members. Quitting this desert—majestic though mournful—you re-enter Rome; you meet an old priest robed in white, who stretches out his hands and blesses both purple and rags—blesses all who will accept of his benediction." His idea of the Pope and his functions was that of sentiment—not of common sense.

On another occasion, describing Hyde Park, he said: "You may have remarked, as I have, that those large and magnificent English horses which make up the best part of the show, have, in spite of their splendid caparisons and elegant forms, a brutish look (*l'air bête*). The ass is a hundred times more intelligent. In the East, he is superb. The ass has a tenacity in his character which cannot be too much praised in an age when obstinacy is a virtue. What a splendid comparison is that of the stubborn warrior of Homer to an ass, who, having entered a field, resists every effort to expel him, and remains a conqueror! But in the West the ass has never been a poetical animal. When warrior hordes found the need of associating horses in their plundering and ravaging excursions, the ass fell from its pre-eminence, and was confounded with the vulgar herd of animals, and reserved only for obscure and servile labours. His intelligence has been thus paralysed, his great qualities overlooked; a hundred imbecilities, by no means worthy of him, have been tacked to his name. This is one of the great acts of injustice of the age. I have a prodigious liking for asses, and have been for a long time their defender."

At another time he said: "There are men who desire to see everything. As for me, I am not curious; nothing seems to me worth the trouble that curiosity gives. Everything wearies me; my life itself is one long weariness. From my infancy I have been indifferent to all things. I have travelled without seeing anything, in the vain hope of escaping from the *ennui* which always pursued me. I have observed nothing with interest; all has passed before my eyes without exciting a desire of knowledge. Virtue is a fine thing; but there must be characters expressly to enjoy it, and before whom to exhibit it. Buffon perceived and appreciated it sometimes; Voltaire covered it with derision and irony; Rousseau made it shameless, and turned it into a paradox. There are some intelligences half-dead; mine was born so. I began, I believe, to feel *ennui* in the bosom of my mother, and since that time I have never once been relieved from its heavy pressure; all here below is so hollow! How is it possible to love glory? The most famous man of his age died, and the DEATH of BOXAPARTE was cried by the common hawkers through the streets—not a single passer-by did I see turn from his path, or slacken his pace to pay but one sou for the printed recital of his death. Mr. Pitt is the only man whose glory has survived him. That which disheartens me in all my works is, that I cannot foresee what posterity will think of

them. I have an interior persuasion that I have written nothing good; what I write with spirit I find fault with half an hour afterwards; *ennui* returns upon me at all moments; solitude pleases me no longer. I want some one, no matter whom, on whom to discharge the superfluity of my thoughts." In all this there was the morbid sentimentalism too often painfully conspicuous in what are called men of genius.

I cannot better terminate my present communication than by the following anecdote. Whilst M. de Chateaubriand was in London as ambassador, he sent to the Literary Association Fund one hundred louis. In consequence of this liberal donation, he was invited to the annual banquet of the Society, to which were also invited many other distinguished personages, and among them, Mr. Canning. After the dinner, M. de Chateaubriand's health was proposed, and he was handsomely thanked for his generous contribution. He immediately rose to reply, but finding some difficulty in expressing himself in English, he begged Mr. Canning, who sat near him, to speak for him; upon which Mr. Canning rose and declared in the name of M. de Chateaubriand, that he had given nothing; that he had only paid a debt; that he had been formerly assisted, and many times, by the Association as a foreign author, during his first residence in England; that he merely made a return of what he had received, and that it was he who had to express gratitude, but not to receive thanks.

THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN.

SOME children in the neighbourhood had collected a number of bulbs and plants which a wealthy proprietor had cast out, as useless or superfluous, from his parterres. With these they planted a vacant plot of ground, surrounded it with a fence of branches, and were immensely pleased with the pleasure garden which they had thus laid out, talking as mightily about it, as if it had been an affair of state, and labouring till the perspiration flowed from their brows. Gotthold happening to pass with a friend, beheld, with pleasure, the delight of the children, and observed: What, then, is the great difference between the toils of age, and the toils of youth? Children plant gardens, build houses, pay money, celebrate marriages, give entertainments, elect emperors and kings, magistrates, ministers and schoolmasters, generals and captains, wage war, and conclude peace, and all with the utmost zeal and pains, until they wear themselves out, and hunger and thirst drive them home. And what more do we who are old? They have at least as much enjoyment in their sport as we in our earnest. Our pleasure is often mingled with great displeasure; our honours are burdensome, and our buildings heaps of sorrow. They lose their time, and so do we. Their labours have little permanence, and ours not much. Saving the exercise of their powers, they reap little profit from their pains, and we none that is solid or lasting. They fancy their employments of great importance, while we regard them as but the sports of children; just as

we suppose we have weighty enterprises on hand, and are supporting the world upon our shoulders, while the Lord is laughing at our folly. They imagine themselves possessed of great wealth, if they have stuffed their little purses with counters, or money made of old cards or broken pottery; but, when they offer their coin for biscuits to the baker, learn with sorrow, that it is worth nothing.

In like manner, we, too, dream that the possession of some hundreds or thousands of pieces of gold makes us great and mighty men, and entitles us to universal respect; whereas, when we appear with them at the gate of heaven, we shall be told that they are filth, and nothing more. It thus appears that life on earth is child's play, for the old not less than for the young; unless, indeed, we attain to the blessedness of the new birth, grow to the stature of men in Christ Jesus, put away childish things and set our affections upon objects worthy the efforts of a soul which is the offspring of God, and destined for immortality."—*Gotthold's "Emblems."*

NOTHING TO DO!

THE success of a little American *jeu d'esprit* in verse, entitled "Nothing to Wear," of which we gave a specimen in number 381 of this journal, has provoked imitations. We have had "Nothing to Eat," and now comes "Nothing to do."* It is a smart trifle, keeping pretty well to the measure of Mr. Butler's piece, and occasionally rising into a good resemblance of the impressive parts of his composition.

The hero of this poem is Sir Geoffrey Goldenstore, who is thus introduced to the reader:—

"It's a fine thing to possess fifteen thousand a year;
There is no argument needed to make that fact clear:
Now my hero, SIR GEOFFREY GOLDENSTORE,
Had certainly this,—some said rather more,—
And being one of a set now exceedingly rare,
Who on the subject of money could have no care,
Need I add he was popular everywhere?
He had, besides the undoubted advantage of wealth,
A tolerably good temper and very good health,
And whilst mamma thought him a *parti* worth hooking,
The daughters pronounced he was very good looking;
Intellect too had not been denied him,
Though, in climbing Parnassus, the ascent might have tried him,
And great classical lore would have sorely defied him,
Yet Sir Geoffrey Goldenstore was not thought a fool;
He knew as much as the mass of his comrades at school;
He left Eton early, and, from that happy day,
Had tried all approved plans to pass time away
But, alas! every rose, we are told, has a thorn,
And, in every man's case, there is something to mourn:
Though Fortune his path with her gifts loved to strew,
Sir Geoffrey Goldenstore found something to rue;
It seems odd, but so often he had nothing to do,
And it made one quite sad at times, I declare,
To hear what a hardship he found it to bear.

"In summer there's yachting, racing, and fishing to do;
And what with shooting and hunting the winter's got through,
For those who can jog on without anything new;
But then, even then, think how much time is lost,
In the summer by rain, in the winter by frost,
What hours, what days, when there's nothing in view,
But to sigh and to murmur—'There's Nothing to Do!'

* By G. M. C. Goodwin. Cheltenham, G. A. Williams & Son; London, Cawthorn, Cockspur Street.

"Sir Geoffrey's seems such a pleasant lot,—
What in the world is there he has not?
A renowned *cordon bleu* for his *chef* he owns,
His table with every luxury groans,
And his wines and liqueurs
Are praised by all connoisseurs,
His horses are the best that money can buy,
And thick in his coverts the pheasants lie,
He has friends in the foot guards, life guards, and blues,
Who swarm down to his house at the time of *battues*;
His horses are ridden,
And nothing forbidden,
That can add to the pleasure of all,
For they fare well at Goldenstore Hall;
Still it is whispered that even in that jovial crew,
There are murmurs at times of 'Nothing to Do.'"

After a description of his various attempts at employing time, all of which are unsuccessful,

"His complaint was pronounced by several M.D.s,
To be *Nimis inertia*,—in fact, too much ease,
Which cannot be cured if you do what you please.
For his comfort he was told by his medical men,
His malady was uncommonly common just then,
Still change and excitement might carry him through
This dangerous complaint of Nothing to do."

Sir Geoffrey makes "the grand tour," and does Paris, Rome, Naples, and other places, but all that he saw

"On Sir Geoffrey made no sort of impression,
Nature had no longer power to shake off his depression."

He then meditates marriage, but this is broken off. So he is left a miserable man with his large fortune and noble opportunities of gaining happiness. The writer would have acted, we think, more skillfully in having painted the opposite picture of Sir Geoffrey, with new motives, turning his talents to account, and released from the grasp of the spirit of *ennui*. The moral, however, is well pointed.

"Nothing to do! Alas! how many we meet
Whose Nothing to Do means Nothing to Eat!
See the drear garret where the seamstress sews,
Earning but little at the best, Heaven knows!
To pay her lodging, meagre food, and clothes;
When short her work she droops in deep despair,
Weary of time and all she has to bear,
Wanting strength with the ills of life to cope,
Wanting everything—food, friends, and hope!
Nothing to Do! Oh! how few know
What these words may tell of want and woe!
See yonder toiling, starving artisan,
Anxious to work,—poor broken-hearted man.
But Fashion's whim a sudden change has made,
And, for a while, thrown out his branch of trade,
He sits, with heavy heart and aching head,
Praying for work to do to give his children bread.

"But few and evil are the days of man,
Even when spared to reach life's longest span,
Yet all man's hope of heaven is cast
On how that little span is passed,
Heedless, alas! of this important truth,—
In idle follies man consumes his youth,
Sorrowing o'er finite griefs below,
Thoughtless of an eternity of woe!
Time passed away, Eternity is come!
But first the question,—Soul, what hast thou done?
How have thy talents and thy wealth been spent?
On earth or heaven have thy thoughts been bent?
What hast thou done and what left undone?
In empty pleasures has life's course been run?
Alas! what will you answer? Idlers, say,
Who spend your time in passing time away;
When, at that dread tribunal you appear,
Cast down and lost in overwhelming fear?
Of your good deeds you then must give account,
Trembling to feel how small is the amount,
When all that's left undone is brought to view!
Too late you'll find how much there was to do!"